

Let me tell you something about the CIA and its people by telling you what they say about themselves. They have a credo which declares their mission and the standards they demand of themselves. It says:

- We produce timely and high quality intelligence for the President and the Government of the United States.
- We provide objective and unbiased evaluations and are always open to new perceptions and ready to challenge conventional wisdom.
- We conduct our activities and ourselves according to the highest standards of integrity, morality and honor and according to the spirit and letter of the law.
- We believe our people are the Agency's most important resource. We seek the best and work to make them better.
- We expect our leaders to demonstrate initiative, a commitment to excellence, and a propensity for action, to reward and protect us in a manner which reflects the special nature of our responsibility, our contribution, and our sacrifices; and to promote among us a sense of mutual trust and shared responsibility.
- We derive our inspiration and commitment to excellence from the inscription in our foyer: "And Ye Shall Know the Truth And The Truth Shall Make You Free."

CIA people have survived one of the most rigorous screening processes known to man--the highest skill requirements, psychological testing, medical clearances, security clearances, polygraphs. Out of an annual average of

153,000 inquires over recent years, we interview only 23,000 applicants. Of those, 10,000 are actively considered by components. Only 4,000 are put in process, and of those, 1,500 make it through the entire screening process and enter on duty. After a candidate has emerged from that funnel, there is a 3-year probationary period. Those who attain career status and their families live with any number of security responsibilities--travel and away from home demands, heavy pressure and time requirements and other constraints. Last year they forfeited 97,000 hours of annual leave and worked untold hours of uncompensated overtime. You won't find that in your ordinary organization. There is no public recognition for achievements, and criticisms--responsible or otherwise--must be tolerated in silence.

Still, these are the people our national leaders turn to when something needs to be done well and fast. In their burdens, there is a satisfaction to be found. Perhaps it is perverse, it may be subtle, but it is real. It is founded on the knowledge that intelligence is our first line of defense, that on doing it well may hang our security and future as a nation. That satisfaction is heightened by understanding the perils represented by nuclear weapons, by terrorism, a weapons system long wielded by outlaw groups and now by sovereign states, now about to obliterate the distinction between war and peace, by the pervasiveness of deliberate destabilization, subversion and instigation and support of revolutionary violence against fragile societies and governments and by a virtual litany of threats like nuclear proliferation, narcotics, theft of our technology, active measures to damage our reputation, confuse our people and our purposes and divide us from our friends and allies and on and on. There is satisfaction and challenge in being the ones called upon to cope with these threats with constant vigilance and readiness for response.

The bonds, the trust and the sharing of responsibility between and among us flourish from knowing the burdens and the risks that are carried with courage and grace, realizing how success, effectiveness and safety depends on the contribution and reliability of each of us, feeling the human and economic cost of each granule of information that pours into our hands and minds and knowing how the value of all that hangs finally on the care and depth and breadth and precision with which those nuggets are evaluated, analyzed and interpreted for their practical meaning. It is by confronting all this in its multiple dimensions and meeting that responsibility in different ways at various levels and with growing effectiveness over time that the qualities of mind and heart and spirit characterize the American Intelligence Community and its people.